

GOVERNMENT
OF
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ZONING COMMISSION

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PUBLIC HEARING

CASE NO. 04-16

TEXT AND MAP AMENDMENTS TO ESTABLISH AND MAP THE
TAKOMA NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL OVERLAY ZONE

+ + + + +

MONDAY

JANUARY 24, 2005

+ + + + +

The Public Hearing of the District of Columbia Zoning Commission convened a 6:30 p.m. in the Office of Zoning Hearing Room at 441 4th Street, Northwest, Suite 220 South, Washington, D.C., Anthony Hood, Chairperson, presiding.

ZONING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

ANTHONY HOOD	Chairperson
KEVIN HILDEBRAND	Commissioner
GREGORY JEFFRIES	Commissioner
JOHN PARSONS	Commissioner

OFFICE OF ZONING STAFF PRESENT:

CLIFFORD MOY	Acting Secretary
SHARON SCHELLLIN	Zoning Specialist

OFFICE OF PLANNING STAFF PRESENT:

ARTHUR JACKSON	Office of Planning
JENNIFER STEINGASSER	Office of Planning

This transcript constitutes the minutes from the Public Hearing held on January 24, 2005.

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CALL TO ORDER:

Anthony Hood.4

OFFICE OF PLANNING:

Arthur Jackson.5

Jennifer Steingasser.17

REPORT OF ANC 4D:

Faith Wheeler35

ADJOURN:

Anthony Hood.57

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

6:41 p.m.

CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Good evening ladies and gentlemen. This is the Public Hearing of the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for Monday, January 24, 2005.

My name is Anthony J. Hood. Joining me this evening are Commissioners Parsons, Jeffries, and Hildebrand.

The subject of this evening's hearing is Zoning Commission Case No. 04-16. This is a request by the Office of Planning for a MAP and TEXT amendment to Title 11 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations Zoning to establish a new neighborhood commercial overlay over certain portions of Takoma Central District.

Notice of today's hearing was published in the D.C. Register on September 10, 2004. This hearing will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of 11 DCMR 3021. Copies of today's hearing announcement are available to you and are located to my left in the wall bin near the door.

Please be advised that this proceeding is being reported by a court reporter and is also webcast live. Accordingly, we must ask you to refrain from

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1 any disruptive noises or actions in the hearing room.

2 The order of procedure will be as follows:
3 preliminary matters; presentation by the Office of
4 Planning; reports of other Government agencies, if
5 any; reports of the ANC ? I believe this one is 4B;
6 organizations and persons in support; and
7 organizations and persons in opposition.

8 The following time constraints will be
9 maintained in this hearing: organizations five
10 minutes, individuals three minutes.

11 The Commission intends to maintain these
12 time limits as strictly as possible in order to hear
13 the case in a reasonable period of time. The
14 Commission reserves the right to change the time
15 limits for presentations, if necessary. And notes
16 that no time shall be ceded.

17 All persons appearing before the
18 Commission are to fill out two witness cards. These
19 cards are located to my left near the door.

20 Upon coming forward to speak to the
21 Commission, please give both cards to the reporter
22 sitting to my right.

23 The decision of the Commission in this
24 case must be based on the public record. To avoid any
25 appearance to the contrary, the Commission requests

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1 that persons present not engage the members of the
2 Commission in conversation during the recess or at any
3 other time.

4 The staff will be available throughout the
5 hearing the discuss procedural questions. Please turn
6 off all beepers and cell phones at this time so as not
7 to disrupt these proceedings.

8 At this time, the Commission will consider
9 any preliminary matters. Does the staff have any
10 preliminary matters?

11 MS. STEINGASSER: No sir.

12 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: No preliminary matters?
13 Okay. With that, I guess we'll go to the presentation
14 by the Office of Planning.

15 Office of planning.

16 MR. JACKSON: Good evening, Mr. Chairman
17 and members of the Commission. My name is Arthur
18 Jackson. I'm a Development Review Specialist from the
19 District of Columbia Office of Planning.

20 And I will present a brief summary of the
21 overall findings and conclusions of the Office of
22 Planning's final report on the proposed Takoma
23 Neighborhood Commercial Overlay District.

24 The proposed TEXT and MAP amendments
25 advance the following land use revitalization

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1 objectives and strategies identified in the Takoma
2 Central District Plan; accommodate near-term housing
3 demand on opportunity sites A through D, sites that
4 are most appropriate for residential and mixed use
5 development; concentrate retail activities along
6 Carroll Street and Fourth Street; retain and
7 strengthen the Takoma Central District as a mixed use
8 neighborhood; and limit negative activities and
9 inappropriate uses in the District.

10 To this end, both land use action items
11 listed in the implementation summary of the plan
12 involve establishing a new zoning overlay district in
13 the Takoma Central District.

14 The Office of Planning determined that
15 although implementing the basic requirements and
16 standards of the Neighborhood Commercial Overlay Zone
17 would generally encourage the desired pattern of land
18 use within the existing C2A Zone District, a few
19 additional provisions are needed.

20 The original Office of Planning proposal
21 included those provisions. However, in response to an
22 issue raised during the Zoning Commission set-down
23 meeting, proposed sections 1310.7 and 1310.8 were
24 revised by the Office of Planning and the Office of
25 the Attorney General to clarify that the proposed

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1 increase in height allowed in the underlying C2A Zone
2 District from 50 to 55 feet only applies to those
3 portions of buildings with a minimum floor area height
4 of fourteen feet clear. The amendment TEXT advertised
5 on August 13, 2004, reflected this revision.

6 Subsequent to submission of the Office of
7 Planning's preliminary report and pre-hearing
8 statement, concerns were raised about the viability of
9 ground floor retail uses that would be required along
10 Blair Road between Spring Street and the C2A Zone
11 District boundary. And impacts of ground floor retail
12 requirement on Live-work townhouses located on the
13 Metro Station Joint Development site just north of the
14 planned village green.

15 The Office of Planning agreed with these
16 concerns, but thinks protections provided by the
17 proposed Takoma Neighborhood Commercial Zone ? Overlay
18 District, are needed in the entire C2A Zone District.
19 So any changes in ground floor residential uses on
20 exempted properties will continue to be consistent
21 with the plan.

22 With this in mind, the Office of Planning
23 now recommends new sections ? subsections 1310.5 and
24 1310.6 that exempt new residential construction along
25 the Blair Road frontage of Square 3187, the Cedar

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1 Street frontage of Square 3352, and the western
2 portion of Square 3353 from the overall Overlay
3 provisions requiring ground floor retail.

4 The new provisions also require that non-
5 residential use voluntarily located on the ground
6 floor and subsequent changes in ground floor
7 residential uses on exempted projects be consistent
8 with the requirements of the Overlay.

9 The Overlay Proposal was circulated among
10 several District agencies for comment. The Department
11 of Housing and Community Development wrote a
12 memorandum of support which I believe is in your
13 packets.

14 Staff presented this proposal to the
15 community and to commercial property owners in the
16 area. Copies of the final OP report were also
17 circulated to single member District representatives
18 and the ANC Chair after the previous public hearing
19 was rescheduled.

20 Before I conclude our report, the Office
21 of Planning would like to thank Lori Monroe and Alan
22 Bergstein from the Office of the Attorney General for
23 their advice and assistance in drafting the TEXT
24 amendment.

25 With that, this concludes the Office of

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1 Planning's summary of the final report. And we remain
2 available for question.

3 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Thank you, Mr. Jackson
4 and Ms. Steingasser.

5 I guess first ? well anyway,
6 Commissioners, do you have any questions for the
7 Office of Planning?

8 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I did have one.
9 I've got, this evening at the testimony from Faith
10 Wheeler. Have you had a chance to look at her
11 testimony?

12 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: In the course of
14 developing the overlay, did you have a chance to meet
15 with the Takoma Business Association of the Historic
16 Takoma Incorporated Board?

17 MR. JACKSON: No. Primarily we dealt with
18 the Plan Takoma and then we had a meeting where we
19 invited property owners that were listed as owning
20 property in the C2A area along the proposed overlay.

21 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Okay. Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Mr. Jackson,
23 something's terribly wrong here. I don't know what it
24 is. I mean the comprehensive plan asked us to do
25 this?

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1 You have fulfilled that by making a
2 proposal. We advertised this in August. We were
3 asked to postpone a hearing in December, I imagine.

4 And here we are tonight with virtually no
5 involvement of the community to come forward, other
6 than the testimony of Faith Wheeler who says she needs
7 more time or they need more time and they need
8 presentations by you.

9 What has gone wrong here? I mean, I'm not
10 accusing you of doing anything wrong. There's
11 something wrong in the community.

12 If they don't want this or are not
13 considering it their priority, I'm amazed. Can you
14 give any insight into that?

15 MR. JACKSON: Well, I would have to say
16 that we have ? during the meetings that we held with
17 the community, we did think that there were some
18 expressions on interest in seeing this go forward.
19 But I think part of the concern is that they weren't
20 quite clear about how this was consistent with the
21 Takoma Plan.

22 Note the Takoma Plan was adopted with a
23 good bit of citizen input. But that the end result
24 really was a plan of action.

25 The actions were specified. We're

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1 following the actions that were specified. But I
2 think in some resident's mind, they don't quite see
3 the connection.

4 This is a planning exercise and we think
5 that, as a planning exercise, it is well rooted in
6 both what the Comprehensive Plan says, and what was
7 specifically called for in the plan that was prepared
8 with community input for the Takoma Central District.

9 But, irrespective of that, there will
10 still be those residents and citizens from the are who
11 were not involved in the process originally, or were
12 peripheral to it, or maybe the process didn't come out
13 with the result that they wanted.

14 That's the only thing I can allude to. We
15 are confident though that what we are proposing is in
16 line with all the planning that was done before. It
17 has been tried in other locations. We don't think
18 that it will have any negative impacts.

19 And really what it does is it refines the
20 variety and the types of uses that are in the area.
21 It's not adding anything that's not already there,
22 except maybe five feet in specific circumstances.

23 CHAIRPERSON PARSONS: Well, I'm trying to
24 understand whether you think anything would be served
25 for you to go out and make further presentations to

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1 these various organizations. Because it seems like
2 we're in a community that's apathetic.

3 MR. JACKSON: Well, when the previous
4 public hearing was rescheduled, as I mentioned, I
5 mailed out e-mailed copies of the final report and
6 offered to meet to discuss any issues.

7 I heard nothing and the only calls I got
8 were last week. So I'm not sure if ? I can't speak
9 for the community per se, but as a professional at the
10 Planning Office, we are following through with the
11 guidance that was given to our office from the
12 community through an interactive process that involved
13 consultants, residents from the community, and
14 property owners who came up with a plan for revision.

15 And we're putting in tools that will allow
16 that vision to occur. I'm not saying that they are
17 perfect and that other things don't have to occur. Of
18 course, the Transportation Plan talks about street
19 improvements that are required and there are a lot of
20 peripheral issues that have to be addressed too.

21 But we think, in terms of a zoning
22 framework, that putting this zone overlay in place
23 will provide the framework for future land use
24 decisions to be made.

25 Now the other issues have to be addressed,

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1 but I think we're providing a good foundation on what
2 currently exists in zoning. Because we're not
3 changing the base zoning, we're just refining it.

4 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Right. I would
5 agree with everything you've said. I'm just trying to
6 figure how ? it just goes beyond any experience I've
7 ever had that we're about to assist a community in
8 protecting what's important to them and they don't
9 seem to be engaged, or are not willing to come forward
10 and say "yes" or "no", or "fix this" or "fix that."
11 It's as though they don't exist.

12 Now maybe not to you, but certainly to the
13 Commission they don't exist.

14 Well, enough of that. I have no questions
15 about your proposal. I think it's good. I just am
16 very concerned that the community is not here. And
17 I'm not sure giving them more time will help.

18 But to essentially be accused of imposing
19 something on them without their participation is
20 troubling.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Sure. Mr. Parsons, I
23 would agree in line with what you're thinking. I know
24 the ANC Commissioners ? the new ones ? I don't know if
25 the letter received today is ? this person, Ms. Faith

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1 Wheeler is new ANC Commissioner or she's continuing
2 her commission ? continuing as being an ANC
3 Commissioner. But I'm very concerned that, in her
4 letter, she's asking us ? and I know we gave her more
5 time previously.

6 But, in January is when new ANC
7 Commissioners come into office. And if it's anything
8 like my neighborhood, it takes about two or three
9 months to get straightened out and get people moving
10 and actually focused on what's going on.

11 Now I know this has been going on for some
12 time out there in Takoma. But I'm very concerned that
13 she's now asking us ? and I'm quote from what she has
14 in the last paragraph.

15 She says, "I respectfully request the
16 Zoning Commission to ask the Office of Planning to
17 meet with the Old Takoma Business Association and the
18 Historic Takoma, Inc. board members and the ANC4B
19 Commissioners to hear their concerns. And then return
20 to the Zoning Commission with a revised final report."

21 Now, I know Mr. Jackson, that you and Ms.
22 Steingasser and the Office of Planning have done a lot
23 of work out there on this. And I don't take that very
24 lightly.

25 But when I have an ANC Commissioner who is

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1 asking that here commission be brought up to speed,
2 and maybe you have done that. Let me start my line of
3 questions from here.

4 Have you ? when was the last time you met
5 with the ANC?

6 MR. JACKSON: We met with them prior to the
7 original set down.

8 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So you met with them
9 prior to ? when did we set it down? September? I
10 don't remember right off. It's been a few months ago.

11 MR. JACKSON: It was ? the first public
12 hearing was in July ?

13 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Oh, we set it down in ?

14 MR. JACKSON: June.

15 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: June? Oh.

16 MR. JACKSON: Yes. June of last year.

17 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Oh.

18 MR. JACKSON: So we met prior to that set
19 down. And then we met with the area property owners
20 after that set down.

21 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I'll tell you, Mr.
22 Jackson. I'm very concerned, as I think Mr. Parsons
23 is. I haven't heard from Commissioner Jeffries or
24 Commissioner Hildebrand. But I'm very concerned that
25 we're going to move forward.

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1 I know in my neighborhood, I would like to
2 feel ? have a comfort level when I'm moving forward
3 anything that, you know, as much input has been given
4 as possible. And I'm sure that's probably been done.

5 But obviously, it hasn't triggered.
6 Sometimes you have to go out, unfortunately, and grab
7 and pull people in.

8 But let me just ask this question, because
9 serving previously on the Comprehensive Task Force the
10 second time, very previously. This actually came up
11 about the ? let me start with this question because
12 I'm unclear myself. Okay.

13 Well actually, it really doesn't matter.
14 We don't have anybody here to testify. So maybe what
15 we can do is postpone. But anyway, let me just ask
16 for my clarification, moving forward, depending upon
17 how the Commission wants to move.

18 The comprehensive plan called for us to do
19 this. And this is developed out of the SNAPs, am I
20 correct?

21 MR. JACKSON: Well, there was a specific
22 Takoma Central District Plan that was a small area
23 plan that was developed at our office in conjunction
24 with Plan Takoma and a consultant that was brought in
25 specifically for this purpose.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So now, is this the only
2 area that this is going to be done in? Or are there
3 going to be more areas to come along after the fact?

4 MR. JACKSON: I'll defer to you.

5 MS. STEINGASSER: There will be more. This
6 small area plan was adopted by Counsel and serves as
7 supplemental guidance to the Comprehensive Plan. It's
8 also consistent with other sections of the
9 Comprehensive Plan.

10 And its implementation began four years
11 ago when we brought forward a rezoning of the
12 industrial lands in this neighborhood to rezone them
13 from CM-1 to C2A.

14 That was our first implementation action
15 of the Plan. We then spent the next year writing the
16 proposed overlay. We did take it to the ANC prior to
17 set down; got some feedback; set it down.

18 We met with all the affected commercial
19 property owners in that corridor. I believe we were
20 at the library.

21 There was a representative of Historic
22 Takoma at the meeting. I do not know whether she was
23 representing Historic Takoma, but she was there.

24 Then of course there was no dissent from
25 the Office of Zoning. When we ? I'm kind of merging

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1 all the questions together here. When it was
2 postponed in October, we then ? Mr. Jackson e-mailed
3 out a copy of the OP Report and TEXT and offered to
4 meet with the ANCs.

5 And, at that point, we had not heard
6 anything back until last week when we were asked to
7 send yet another copy of the report out.

8 So we are available to meet with the ANC.
9 We've not met with these other groups and I'm not
10 familiar with the Old Takoma Business Association. We
11 did meet with the commercial business property owners
12 that own all the property in the area. So we felt we
13 were reaching out in that regard.

14 So then, this is the second Zoning action
15 to implement that Plan Takoma. There will be other
16 small area plans. H Street is going to be a similar
17 type of zoning overlay implementing a small area plan.
18 Georgia Avenue will be coming forward with a small
19 area plan.

20 The Uptown Arts Destination District,
21 which is the North Shaw, 14th Street, U Street area ?
22 I'm sorry, North Shaw, U Street, 7th area. That will
23 also have a plan going forward to the City Counsel.
24 And I think finally Shaw will have a community based
25 plan that will be coming forward that may have some

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1 zoning actions that will be tied to it.

2 So you will be seeing more of these types
3 of plans with actions.

4 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Which leads me to my
5 next question, Ms. Steingasser or Mr. Jackson, and I
6 underlined it but now I can't find it. But it talked
7 about "less industrial uses."

8 If we start doing that in this plan, and
9 we've got more plans to follow, that concerns me. And
10 I'm not exactly sure if I can put my hand on it, but
11 it's in here.

12 Oh, here it is. 1530.1, "Discourage more
13 industrial use."

14 And I think we run into a problem. Not
15 just for this plan. Maybe it's in this plan. But you
16 know, everybody in the city is going to want that in
17 their plan.

18 MS. STEINGASSER: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I mean, so we really
20 need to look at that.

21 MS. STEINGASSER: We are. And the
22 Industrial Land Use Study that we've been talking
23 about for the last two years has been funded. The RFP
24 I believe was let last friday. And we have
25 contributions from other city agencies to help that

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1 study move forward. And it is moving forward with
2 priority on city uses and industrial uses.

3 In this particular neighborhood, this is
4 a very old community. And it's got narrow streets.
5 And there was just a face-to-face of single family
6 detached and industrial districts.

7 So it was called for in both the Comp Plan
8 and the Small Area Plan to convert that industrial to
9 a C2A district. The industrial land use owners did
10 not object to that rezoning.

11 But if ? we are aware that the Commission
12 has a lot of concerns. And as we have had people come
13 to the Office of Planning asking about rezoning for
14 different types of PUD type residential or commercial
15 development, we've made them very aware that the
16 Commission is very hesitant to move forward on any of
17 those kind of cases until that land use study is
18 complete.

19 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. But let me say
20 this. Ms. Steingasser and Mr. Jackson, I like the
21 plan. I think it looks well. But the concern that I
22 have, and I have some more questions but I want to
23 hear form my colleagues.

24 The concern that I have is that ANC, the
25 folks who live around there, and I guess some business

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1 people. Maybe, it may not. But the people who live
2 in that neighborhood, as opposed who do business in
3 that neighborhood, who are business owners. And when
4 I saw this and nobody's testifying. And that concerns
5 me too.

6 But I will definitely take your work for
7 that ? everybody's in agreeance with it. But the ANC
8 Commissioner, Ms. Wheeler, has a concern. And that is
9 my concern. She's asking for the Office of Planning to
10 go back out there.

11 I would feel comfortable if we moved in
12 that direction. But I'll wait to hear what my other
13 colleagues have to say.

14 But another question, while I have the
15 mike, Ms. Steingasser is, what takes precedent? This
16 amendment or the Comp Plan. And this actually came up
17 in the task force meeting and there was a big
18 argument. Well not "argument". A big discussion
19 about that.

20 I don't know if you've already heard it,
21 and with the revamping of the Comprehensive Plan
22 that's taken place now and everything, there is a lot
23 of concern about this; about these small area ? well,
24 I want to call them "small area plans." Maybe there
25 are not the same. Maybe I'm talking ?

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1 MS. STEINGASSER: There is a legal
2 difference between a small area plan and a strategic
3 area plan, which is what these are. We call these
4 "strategic area plans" because they are not, in the
5 full context, an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

6 That's why we've been instructed by the
7 Office of the Attorney General to say that they
8 provide "additional guidance." They are an expression
9 of the Counsel's support for the plan, as they express
10 the Comprehensive Plan.

11 When you say, "Which has controlling ?

12 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Which one ? when both of
13 them are contradicting each other. I'm talking about
14 for someone who has to use the document.

15 MS. STEINGASSER: The Comprehensive Plan
16 and the Strategic Area Plan?

17 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yes. They both are
18 legal. They both are the law. So which one, from a
19 Commissioner's standpoint, do we ? you know, if
20 they're contradicting each other ?

21 MS. STEINGASSER: It's a balancing.

22 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Some more balancing?

23 MS. STEINGASSER: I wish ? it's a little
24 more balancing of what the ? the Comprehensive Plan
25 has been adopted in full by the City Counsel. These

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1 are strategic plans that provide additional guidance.
2 They often represent a more current interpretation of
3 the Comprehensive Plan and the changing flows of
4 neighborhoods.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay.

6 MS. STEINGASSER: So maybe that's ?

7 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. I have some more
8 questions and, depending upon how we move, but I'll
9 ask those at a later time.

10 MS. STEINGASSER: Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Commissioner Jeffries?

12 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Hi Mr. Jackson. I
13 just had a question around your memo around your
14 request to make an amendment to the TEXT around just
15 exempting some of the residential development of the
16 ground floor retail requirement.

17 I am clearly very sympathetic to this
18 whole notion of reducing retail. I mean, so often
19 we've seen in a number of our neighborhoods, this
20 pushed to have ground floor retail with housing above.
21 But there's a lot of complications associated with
22 that.

23 And you'll find a lot of private sector
24 developers really ? those that are very thoughtful,
25 sort of concerned about, you know, exactly how that's

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1 configured and how that works.

2 However, I'm just sort of curious, given
3 that this is partially a transit oriented development.
4 And in those developments, we obviously look for
5 increased housing and also retail. Given that you're
6 going to have this build up of density in these areas,
7 whether your driver for putting this in was
8 sufficient, just looking at a contract purchaser and
9 their concerns about the marketability of the retail.

10 I mean, were there other things that you
11 looked to beyond just a purchaser saying that, you
12 know, this is going to be a problem having retail?
13 Were there other things, consultants, anything that
14 you looked at that gave you comfort that perhaps we
15 can move away from this retail use on the ground
16 floor?

17 MR. JACKSON: Well, when we went back and
18 looked at the actual Comp Plan that was adopted, the
19 Plan Takoma, the Plan itself on page 28 ? the
20 Preferred Land Use Concept ? does not show mixed use
21 west of ? in the area where we're proposing to put it.

22 In other words, they are actually showing
23 this area for garden apartments and townhouses.

24 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes. Yes.

25 MR. JACKSON: So what you try to do often

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1 times with zoning patterns is you try to make them
2 logical so that they extend from one end of the
3 District to the other.

4 So initially, we went for a more
5 aggressive approach where we actually continued the
6 potential retail space all the way up Blair Road to
7 the end of the C2 Zoning District.

8 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay.

9 MR. JACKSON: But, on further review, when
10 the contractor first raised the issues that they did,
11 we went back and looked at the plan for the site. And
12 in effect, now we're talking about the site that's
13 just north of Cedar along Blair, past the existing
14 alley, or the paper alley.

15 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Right.

16 MR. JACKSON: It's planned for garden
17 apartments.

18 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay.

19 MR. JACKSON: Now, when we looked at the ?
20 on the other side of the street, north of Carroll
21 Street, on the Metro site ?

22 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Right.

23 MR. JACKSON: If you look at the master
24 plan for that in the Takoma plan, it really calls for
25 a very large open space there.

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1 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes.

2 MR. JACKSON: Which is seen as critical to
3 the success of Downtown Takoma. A lot of the issues
4 have been raised about the existing open space,
5 whether it should stay or go. But I think there's
6 been fairly consistent messages that Takoma needed a
7 central open space. And so, that central open space
8 should be down on the southernmost portion of the
9 Metro site.

10 Now given that, you basically have moved
11 your retail far away from the street. And that
12 proximity ? it's no longer in close proximity to the
13 retail across the street. So it's not really going to
14 provide them ? what we're looking for is activity
15 along the street frontage that would kind of serve to
16 generate additional activity across the street. So
17 that it's a continuous retail and also facing retail?

18 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Right.

19 MR. JACKSON: That just wouldn't be the
20 case there.

21 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes. Because
22 normally you'd look for a 24-7 active streets. So I
23 just want to be clear. So where is the retail going
24 to be in relation to the Takoma Park Station, as I
25 look at this? I'm just ?

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1 MR. JACKSON: Okay, well if you look at
2 what was originally proposed, the retail would be, if
3 you're going east of the right of way, the Metro right
4 of way, it will be along the southern side of Carroll
5 Street, all the way to the District line.

6 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Right. Right. The
7 southern side of Carroll. Okay.

8 MR. JACKSON: It would be on the southern
9 side of Cedar Street up to the limits of the overlay,
10 which would be 100 feet ? in essence 100 feet north of
11 Carroll Street.

12 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay.

13 MR. JACKSON: And it would be, of course,
14 along 4th Street and Blair Road, going south. Now, as
15 you go up Blair Road, basically it's being developed
16 now. There's a residential construction that's taking
17 up all the space on Blair Road north of Cedar Street,
18 although there is a building at the corner that could
19 be held for retail.

20 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Right. Yes.

21 MR. JACKSON: But we're thinking, in the
22 future, long term.

23 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Right.

24 MR. JACKSON: If they should decide to
25 change the ground floor usage for some reason, or

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1 those buildings should go away, we would like to see
2 that still be consistent with what the Plan is calling
3 for. Which is mixed use residential, office, and
4 retail at that corner. But then, it doesn't extend
5 much past the ? I'd say, the service station on the
6 opposite side.

7 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay.

8 MR. JACKSON: It wouldn't go much beyond
9 that.

10 Now, one of the guiding factors too is
11 that we wanted to have concentrated, continuous
12 retail. Something that would be self-generating.

13 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Right.

14 MR. JACKSON: And, when you get much beyond
15 that point, on the south side of Blair Road, it's all
16 residential.

17 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Right.

18 MR. JACKSON: So again, we think the
19 applicant ? we originally proposed something that was
20 more aggressive that was proposed in the plan. And I
21 think the contract purchaser raised some issues that
22 have ? the contract purchaser and one of the partners
23 in the Metro Station development raised issues that we
24 think are relevant.

25 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes.

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1 MR. JACKSON: So, between the two, we think
2 this is the appropriate course.

3 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay. So just
4 given this build up of housing and so forth, you're
5 not going to look at the situation where you could
6 possibly be under-retailed in so many years? That's
7 not a possibility?

8 MR. JACKSON: No. But now, what we are
9 saying though that is if they go forward now with
10 residential and the residential space is developed in
11 a property that is essentially exempt from the current
12 retail requirement, then they can't come back in and
13 refit the space for retail uses if it doesn't meet our
14 goals of the overlay.

15 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay.

16 MR. JACKSON: Which means it needs to have
17 a fourteen foot ceiling and I guess that's a principle
18 concern. And as that is just so that we are sure that
19 any future retail that's developed along the strip ?

20 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Right.

21 MR. JACKSON: ? is of a type that is going
22 to be successful as neighborhood serving.

23 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay. Okay. Thank
24 you very much.

25 MR. JACKSON: Thank you.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Any other questions?

2 Okay. Thank you.

3 Next we have the reports of other
4 Government agencies. And the only one that I see, and
5 if anybody can help me out as they see fit, is from
6 the Department of Housing and Community Development;
7 Mr. Stan Jackson, who is now I believe the Deputy
8 Mayor of Economic Incline. But anyway, at this time,
9 he provided a letter.

10 And they are in support of this proposed
11 TEXT amendment to create the Takoma Neighborhood
12 Community Overlay Zone and MAP amendment to the MAP
13 overlay.

14 Do we have any other Government reports?
15 Anyone here from ANC4B? Report of the ANC? Ms.
16 Schellin was nice enough to bring me the list of
17 witnesses. And the only name I have on here is a zero
18 with a line going through it.

19 So I know that person obviously is not
20 here. But is there anyone that would like to testify
21 in support? Anyone in support? Anyone in opposition?

22 Okay. All right. Let the record reflect
23 that we've called for support and in opposition.

24 Commissioners, one of my concerns is the
25 ANC. I would like for us to ? I guess the best way,

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1 and I'm open for any suggestions, is to leave the
2 record open for comment. Thirty days is not enough,
3 I think, for ANCs. I'm sorry. I think 45 days is
4 probably enough.

5 And we probably wouldn't get it in our
6 February meeting anyway. So if we would try to deal
7 with this in a -- we probably would have to have a ?
8 or no, we'd either do a special meeting or maybe our
9 March meeting.

10 I'm just throwing that up to for ?

11 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: But Chair, aren't
12 they meeting January 27th?

13 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Who?

14 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: ANC.

15 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: The ANC's meeting the
16 27th?

17 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Did I? I thought
18 I read that somewhere.

19 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: That would be there
20 first meeting. It's on the 27th according to ?

21 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: The first meeting is on
22 the 27th.

23 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: I think what Mr.
24 Hood is saying is those are normally organizational
25 meetings.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Well, it's a new
2 committee.

3 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: You know, trying to
4 get some resolution to this, given the lack of that
5 over the past six months and giving them the
6 opportunity to have a second meeting is what you're
7 pushing for?

8 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Yes. Normally, they ?
9 I don't want to say they fight, but they go back and
10 forth about who's going to be the Chairperson, the
11 Vice-Char, and you know trust me, I'm going to one
12 myself this week. So I know. I know what's going to
13 happen.

14 So, I would think that if they get their
15 selves together in January, we'll afford them the
16 opportunity. And I'm going to ask Ms. Schellin to
17 make sure that they know that we're affording them the
18 opportunity as in Ms. Wheeler's request.

19 Because I think it's very important that
20 the ANCs have at least the opportunity to comment.
21 Because I will tell you, and let me just say this,
22 Commissioner Jeffries, I guess who he's representing
23 ? I've skimmed over this.

24 The issue was they are also in support of
25 the amendment now that Square 3187 is modified with

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1 the exclusion of retail requirements. And I think
2 that has been ? that's in line with the Office of
3 Planning's proposal.

4 MR. JACKSON: Okay?

5 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So, even though they're
6 going meet, Commissioner Jeffries. in January, I would
7 hope that February would be a ? March maybe would be
8 time enough to give ANC a chance to respond.

9 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Chairman Hood, I
10 understand and I absolutely appreciate your
11 sensitivity around here, I guess around the community.
12 And I too am concerned about the community, but I've
13 also seen so many instances where, you know, when I
14 was at NCRC, you know, you can spend a lot of time
15 with community. And you're always going to miss some
16 community group or some civic association, or
17 something that two or three people got together and
18 formed something. And you've got to meet with them

19 So I hear you and I'm appreciative of it.
20 But, you know, it would be nice if this could get
21 wrapped up sooner rather than later.

22 So I just want to make certain of that.
23 I'd just, you know, things coming back, growing legs,
24 and taking on different forms or just are not
25 particularly attractive to me. But this is fine.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Let me ask the Office of
2 Planning. Thank you Commissioner Jeffries. Let me
3 ask the Office of Planning, will we be doing any harm
4 or damage if we were to delay this and give the ANC an
5 opportunity and we'd maybe take it up at our March
6 meeting? As opposed to February?

7 MS. STEINGASSER: I don't believe so.

8 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: It won't be harming
9 anyone?

10 MS. STEINGASSER: And we have volunteered,
11 as of last week, to meet with the ANC. We just
12 haven't heard back as to whether they actually want us
13 to show.

14 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Let me do this. Ms.
15 Wheeler ? are you Ms. Wheeler? Oh, good guess. Even
16 though I didn't guess it.

17 But if you could come to the table.
18 Unfortunately, you've missed a lot of our discussion.
19 That's okay. If you can come to the table and just ?
20 and I'm doing this out of order. But if you can come
21 to the table and give us your name, who you
22 representing, and just ? let me just say this to you
23 Ms. Wheeler. We received your letter.

24 But let me hold off. You can give us your
25 name and ? actually, we have actually read your

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1 statement. So if you want to just give it to us in
2 brief, that would be fine.

3 Turn your mike on, Ms. Wheeler.

4 MS. WHEELER: Is that on now? Can you
5 hear? Okay. Thank you very much all of you. I
6 really appreciate your indulgence actually. And my
7 apologies.

8 I have technical difficulties as Ms.
9 Schellin knows and was very helpful with.

10 I am Faith Wheeler. I am an ANC
11 Commissioner in 4D. I'm a 26-year resident, as you
12 saw I guess in the information that I left for you or
13 sent to you, in Takoma. And I have a very active
14 interest in Takoma through my participation in a
15 number of organizations and testifying in a number of
16 issues over the years. As well as having thirty years
17 of experience in development issues a multilateral
18 financial institution in Washington here.

19 I feel very strongly that this
20 revitalization must be successful; must be uncommonly
21 successful and sustainable in Takoma. And as we've
22 seen in evaluations of revitalizations in various
23 areas throughout the country, there is no guarantee
24 that transit-oriented developments, smart growth
25 concepts are uniformly successful.

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1 We must look at the factors. We must look
2 at the possible impacts. We must look at the
3 interests. It's essential. It's crucial.

4 I think ? I totally believe that everyone,
5 and I know everyone in Takoma wants a successful
6 revitalization. I know of no one who does not share
7 that concern. No one.

8 Takoma is quite a jewel. I don't know how
9 many of you, or if any of you have visited there or
10 live there or know much about it. Thank you.

11 It's a very unusual place here at the edge
12 of the nation's capitol. It has rather unusual and
13 particular cache because of its architecture; because
14 of its values; because of its diversity; because of
15 its history of integration of purposeful integration,
16 racially, economically, ethnically every way you can
17 think of.

18 This is Takoma. This is our pride and
19 joy. This is our jewel that needs to be polished.
20 And not thought of as a place where we can set down a
21 template of a concept.

22 It is a very special place. We have a
23 number of new families with young children who have
24 moved in. Lots. Lots and lots. They've moved to
25 Takoma for what it is and for what it can be.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Ms. Wheeler, can you
2 hold on for one second while we change tapes?

3 MS. WHEELER: Yes sir.

4 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. You can continue.
5 Thank you.

6 MS. WHEELER: Thank you. Okay. I think
7 most folks who move there saw the potential, see the
8 potential. It has tremendous potential of being a
9 traditional neighborhood commercial district, for
10 example, that attracts visitors and tourists and
11 residents alike to shop there far more than people do
12 now.

13 None the less, it is still now a tourist
14 spot, as you saw reading the testimony that I gave
15 you, by the D.C. Preservation League, the D.C.
16 Cultural Tourism, by a local entrepreneur who has two
17 business now; one in Takoma Park, Maryland and one in
18 Takoma, D.C., bringing in European visitors to see our
19 jewel. Our pride and joy. And shop there and spend
20 there.

21 We need to be ? to continue to be special;
22 to enhance our uniqueness. Which is what the Main
23 Street Program, the National Trust for Historic
24 Preservation's Main Street Program is all about. To
25 bring people back to the traditional commercial

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1 districts; traditional neighborhood commercial
2 districts.

3 That's what we are. We have the
4 foundation of that and we can be much more than that.
5 Much more of that than we are. We have tremendous
6 potential.

7 We'd like very much to realize that
8 potential. We just cringe at the thought of an
9 attempt to make us another Silver Spring. We can't.
10 As my mother-in-law used to say, we'd be neither he,
11 she, nor the old lady. We just wouldn't.

12 We have to ? we have to recognize what we
13 are; the essence of what we are, and enhance that.
14 It's so important. It's so important. We have such
15 incredible potential. Like no other place I know
16 about in the Washington area.

17 What more can I say? To touch on the
18 points of the proposal ? the Office of Planning's
19 proposal. And I know Mr. Jackson and other staff of
20 the Office of Planning have worked long and hard and
21 patiently on this.

22 I am very concerned about community input.
23 There has been very little; extraordinarily little,
24 and from important organizations. And also, in fact,
25 the Plan Takoma input mentioned in the study did not

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1 make mention of questions that were raised at that
2 Plan Takoma meeting by me among others. I was there.

3 We have ? the proposal suggests, among
4 other things, an allowance of five-story buildings.
5 Picture if you would, if you know the central corridor
6 there of Takoma. Picture if you would, that corridor
7 of those streets of old Takoma bordered by five-story
8 buildings.

9 I can't even begin to think about it. It
10 has nothing to do with Takoma. Nothing to do with the
11 essence of Takoma. Nothing.

12 I know the city wants to bring in ? I know
13 the mayor wants to bring 100,000 new people in. And
14 by some accounts, we're losing people. That needs to
15 be analyzed. Why is that?

16 People look for ? people who want to stay,
17 in my experience, look for communities; look for
18 communities that have some character. And if any
19 place in the Washington area has character, by God,
20 it's Takoma. It is Takoma.

21 And we want to enhance that character,
22 that very special character. And we need your help to
23 do that.

24 We can be such an incredible magnet for
25 tourists, for visitors, for the economy of that area

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1 of Washington. Or we can be a bedroom community
2 that's nothing and that is really kind of blah.

3 I don't know what else to say about that
4 possibility. I really don't.

5 We have a vibrant ? you know, I don't
6 know. Maybe some of you have read Richard Florida's
7 book, Creative ?, I cant remember the name of it now.
8 Maybe some of you have. It escapes me, but the word
9 "creative" is in it. And it talks about communities
10 of diversity; communities with all sorts of different
11 professional disciplines and interests and people with
12 ideas who want to explore.

13 Well that's Takoma. That is Takoma. And
14 it's also the Washington area in general. But it ?
15 and very particularly, it is Takoma.

16 Another author, Tom Beatley, who's a
17 professor at the University of Virginia, has written
18 a book on "green urbanism". Which I highly recommend
19 to you as well.

20 He talks about the ? how green spaces;
21 attractive green spaces need to be incorporated into
22 city communities to help them be vibrant. And this
23 fits in also with Richard Florida's ideas.

24 People are very interested in a diversity
25 of people; a diversity of architecture; a diversity of

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1 places; of opportunities; of being outside and
2 enjoying. Enjoying all of that and being stimulated
3 by all of that.

4 We want ? we want to continue that. That
5 is again Takoma. We want to continue that. We don't
6 want a faceless look to our community. That is not
7 Takoma. It can become Takoma if the powers that be,
8 you included, so want.

9 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Ms. Wheeler ?

10 MS. WHEELER: But I don't understand ? I
11 wouldn't understand why anybody would want that.

12 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Let me just kind of
13 bring you up to speed on where we were.

14 MS. WHEELER: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Your last request in
16 your letter.

17 MS. WHEELER: Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: We were in the process
19 when you came in of dealing with that specifically.

20 MS. WHEELER: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I'm just trying to save
22 you a little time because some of that you might take
23 back to the neighborhood. And then you all come down
24 with a unified effort.

25 And I'm not cutting you off. I'm just

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1 saving you some time here.

2 MS. WHEELER: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: That's where we were. We
4 were in the process of trying to see about how much
5 time we could allow for you and the Office of Planning
6 to go back and gather up all the troops.

7 The ANC go out ? I'm very concerned.
8 Commissioner Parsons and myself and others, we're very
9 concerned about the ANC not taking the vote and not
10 being ? obviously were a participant, because you're
11 an ANC Commissioner yourself.

12 MS. WHEELER: Thank you. I appreciate
13 that. I understand.

14 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So, to say that you all
15 did not participate would be not telling the truth.
16 Because you obviously did. At least you participated.
17 I'm not sure about everyone else.

18 So what I would encourage you to do,
19 because we're going to allow some more time.

20 MS. WHEELER: I appreciate that very much.

21 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: I know you all are going
22 to meet. You're going to meet this week but you're
23 going to be voting, I'm sure, for your officers. Am
24 I correct?

25 MS. WHEELER: That's correct. We have no

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1 officers yet.

2 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Right. So I had that
3 down.

4 MS. WHEELER: Right. You do.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So what we're going to
6 do is, we're going to try to take this up at our
7 meeting in March. So what we're going to do. We're
8 going to ask the Office of Planning, because actually
9 we think it's a good plan, but we want to make sure
10 that we have the input from the residents who reside
11 in that particular area.

12 My colleagues, you can chime in whenever
13 you get ready, if I leave something out.

14 But we want to make sure that we have the
15 input on it and we're affording you the opportunity
16 again. And we're going to also, since you came down
17 and you wrote us this nice eloquent four-page
18 submittal, we're going to also give you the task to go
19 back and make sure your ANC gets on board. And they
20 have good dialogue with the Office of Planning so we
21 can move this thing forward.

22 MS. WHEELER: I would appreciate that.
23 Very much so.

24 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay.

25 MS. WHEELER: I would enjoy it, in fact.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Commissioner Jeffries is
2 trying to get in here.

3 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes. Okay.
4 Commissioner Wheeler, just a question. Based on your
5 understanding about what the Office of Planning has
6 put forth in this overlay.

7 MS. WHEELER: Yes sir.

8 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Do you feel that
9 you guys are very far apart? I mean because you know,
10 quite frankly, March might not be enough time for your
11 discussions and so forth. I mean, it sounds wonderful
12 as we sit here today in January, but if you are very
13 far.

14 I mean, you've made a number of statements
15 here that, you know, I think from what I'm hearing and
16 what I'm reading, there's a distance there.

17 MS. WHEELER: There is.

18 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: So I just want to,
19 you know, make certain. I mean, you know, whether you
20 think March will be sufficient.

21 MS. WHEELER: Well, needless to say we
22 would appreciate as much time as possible. That's for
23 sure. And I appreciate again all of your interest and
24 wanting to in fact hear concerns and give the
25 opportunity to come to agreements and to share

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1 information.

2 There's a lot of information that has not
3 been considered, as well. As perhaps you noticed. It
4 just hasn't been considered. And probably not known.
5 And there's just so much going on.

6 I'm going to work, for example, hard and
7 fast on a Walter Reed issue which maybe some of you
8 may know something about, or maybe not. But that
9 again is a very serious issue. And it again has
10 something to ? you know, some relationship to what's
11 going on here in Takoma.

12 And so many people do not know about the
13 many many proposals that are under way in this area.
14 And I probably don't either. But I seem to know about
15 a number of them, in any case. And I would ? I think
16 it's important that we share that information so that
17 we're all coming to it understanding what will happen.

18 Because more than anything else, we the
19 residents will be the ones who will be impacted by
20 whatever happens. Whether we're aware of it now or
21 not. Or whether you are aware of it now or not. We
22 will be impacted.

23 And it's better ? far better if we can
24 plan and if we can work together and share the
25 information and find the best kinds of paths to follow

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1 so that we come to what I like to call "uncommonly
2 successful and sustainable revitalization." A vibrant
3 revitalization that lasts; that serves our community
4 and serves the city of Washington, D.C.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Thank you. And I
6 definitely appreciate your comments. And you know,
7 again I was just really struck with some of the things
8 ? some of the themes that you're putting forth. That
9 might very much be in direct opposition to some of the
10 things that are trying to be pushed forward by the
11 Office of Planning.

12 And I'd just like to manage expectations
13 and just sort of understand that, you know, I am
14 hoping that as you go forward and that everybody keeps
15 an open mind here and recognizes that obviously there
16 will be some level of change.

17 You know, we have so many people that come
18 before this commission so concerned about their
19 neighborhoods changing. And all of these
20 neighborhoods are changing.

21 MS. WHEELER: I understand.

22 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: And I am. I'm a new
23 resident effectively. I've been here almost four
24 years. But I can understand you being here 26 years,
25 the impact that it's having on you.

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1 But there are so many changes happening in
2 all of these neighborhoods and we're hearing a very
3 similar kind of concern. And the question is how do
4 you bridge that gap? Managing change effectively.

5 MS. WHEELER: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: And so I just, again,
7 I'm hoping that we all sort of walk in to these
8 meetings with open minds. And recognizing that, you
9 know, the clock is ticking.

10 MS. WHEELER: Right. May I respond to
11 that? I'd like to say change is my middle name,
12 practically. It wasn't my given name, but I've
13 basically adopted it.

14 I welcome change. But it has to be not
15 change for change's sake. It has to be change that
16 moves toward a successful outcome. That's what we all
17 want. A successful outcome.

18 And there's no way anybody can stop
19 change, no matter how hard you try. But what we can
20 do is understand various impacts and guide the change
21 and guide proposals to make that change as wonderful
22 as possible. And that's what we want to do.

23 And I can't imagine not changing. I just
24 can't. I just can't imagine it.

25 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Commissioner Hildebrand?

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1 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I guess I am
2 struck by one thing. My vision of Takoma is, as you
3 say, of a neighborhood of diversity and engagement and
4 involvement in the community.

5 And I think that's what strikes me as so
6 odd about this, is that why do you think that the
7 community has not been engaged in this process? I
8 mean the Takoma Central District Plan has been in
9 development prior to 2002.

10 And here we are in 2005 having a hearing
11 on an overlay that's the direct result of a plan
12 that's now going on three years old. And the
13 community hasn't come together to either embrace the
14 plan or to make constructive adjustments to it.

15 Why do you think that is?

16 MS. WHEELER: I'd be happy to address that
17 question, sir. I think, in part, the difficulty ? I
18 can give you, I think, a summary of community
19 participation in that Central District Plan, Takoma
20 Central District Plan.

21 And I think the vignette which is perhaps
22 most telling is that, during the process of
23 discussion, of meetings, it was very divisive in the
24 community. Extraordinarily divisive. Some of the
25 divisiveness still lasts very deeply.

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1 I'm ? by nature, I like to bring folks
2 together and bridge difficulties and differences;
3 recognizing differences. And listening. That's
4 simply my nature. I'm known for that in my family,
5 for goodness sakes. I can't get away from it.

6 And I've tried to do that here in Takoma,
7 certainly. And, to be specific, to give you an
8 example, one group who is perhaps the most vocal group
9 distributed a petition that said, and I'll paraphrase,
10 something along the order of, "We the undersigned want
11 revitalization in Takoma. Therefore, we recommend the
12 approval of the second ? of the Takoma Central
13 District Plan."

14 Well, I don't ? I can't think of a single
15 person who can't agree with that first statement, "We
16 want revitalization." I can't think of a single
17 person in all of Takoma; all of our some 6,000
18 inhabitants. But approving the Central District Plan,
19 that's something else.

20 The other group of which I must, in the
21 interest of full disclosure, I participated in, said,
22 "We do not want 65 to 95 townhouses on the green
23 space. The Takoma Metro green space." Because it's
24 the park adjacent to the Takoma Metro station, between
25 the Takoma Metro entrance and the 7-11.

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1 "And we therefore recommend that the city
2 counsel, our counsel member on the city counsel,
3 revise the plan ? ask the Office of Planning to revise
4 the Takoma Central District Plan to recognize the
5 importance of that green space. And recognize the
6 promise that WMATA made to the community many years
7 before, when the Metro station was first being built."

8 Over 800 people signed that petition, with
9 very specific language. I personally went around and
10 knocked door to door on people's doors and told them
11 about it; explained it to them.

12 I had the Takoma Central District Plan
13 with me. I showed it to them. I read it to them.
14 They read it. There was no question about whether or
15 not they understood what they were signing. Over 800
16 people. And the other was fewer than 200.

17 The people who I spoke with, I calculated
18 at least 90 percent of the people I even spoke to
19 signed my petitions. So you get a picture of the kind
20 of divisiveness that it arose in the community.

21 Nonetheless, the City Counsel did approve
22 it and the Office of Planning went forward. Not
23 recognizing the vast majority of the community who
24 were opposed to that aspect, specifically, of that
25 plan.

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1 And but opposed ? and it became something
2 in which people were talking about opposition opposing
3 rather than proposing. Which is the slant that I
4 tried to give it. Let's propose. Let's embrace
5 concepts that will work. Let's go forward and propose
6 possibilities.

7 And it's a long road. It's a very long
8 row to hoe. Very long. Because the feelings run
9 still very deep. Very deep. And that's why I think
10 both sites ? both Takoma Park, Maryland and here ? and
11 in Takoma, D.C. I mean it's well the entire
12 community. It's very difficult to even discuss the
13 subject in Takoma.

14 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I think you have
15 a big challenge ahead of you then to try to get the
16 message out to the community that they have a window
17 of time here to really be engaged and involved.

18 MS. WHEELER: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: And to try to
20 influence the overlay.

21 MS. WHEELER: Exactly. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. What I want to do,
23 Ms. Wheeler. Actually, your testimony went longer
24 than a presentation, the Office of Planning, our
25 discussions, and everything.

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1 I think it's time for us to cut it off.
2 And I appreciate you coming down to give us the
3 insight.

4 MS. WHEELER: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: What I don't want to do
6 is rehash what has happened in front of the Counsel.
7 The Counsel has already voted on it and made it a law.
8 We're going to proceed in the order in which we need
9 to proceed.

10 MS. WHEELER: I see.

11 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: So, my colleague
12 mentioned about some addition time. Unfortunately,
13 March is where I would like to proceed, unless I'm
14 overruled. I think March is the time. Because I
15 don't want it to die for lack of attention.

16 MS. WHEELER: Of course.

17 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: And I think if we give
18 you a time frame, I think you can go back and rally up
19 the troops, especially ANC. Because, by law, we have
20 to give the ANC ? you being the Commissioner know, we
21 have to give the ANC a great weight.

22 You might not be able to get all these
23 other groups, but the ANC is supposed to be the
24 representatives for the 2000 or 2500 constituents,
25 including the businesses in that area.

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1 So, if you can rally the ANC. Are you the
2 Chairperson? You're not the Chairperson?

3 MS. WHEELER: We don't have officers yet.

4 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Oh. Okay. So you all
5 are ? yes, that's why we're extending it until March.
6 So hopefully the Office of Planning and the ANC can
7 get together and come back with something in March.
8 If not, I'm sure my colleagues and I are up to the
9 task to try to move things forward.

10 So with that, Ms. Wheeler, thank you for
11 coming down and testifying. We're looking forward to
12 hearing of a successful conclusion in March.

13 Mr. Jackson?

14 MR. JACKSON: Just one statement, just for
15 the record. My question to you about do you think you
16 need a lot more time wasn't that I was looking to give
17 you more time.

18 It's more just being very honest about,
19 you know, what it's going to take. And that, you
20 know, everybody needs to understand that the clock is
21 ticking. And that I think we'd like to get this thing
22 wrapped up sooner rather than later.

23 And just to be honest about sort of where
24 things are.

25 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Let me ask the Office of

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1 Planning if, when you go back out to the area, to the
2 neighborhood, Takoma. Before you've done something at
3 least for us, for the Commissioners, of where you
4 differ. What the issue was; where the Office of
5 Planning stands and where the community is.

6 And I think if we can just do that for
7 where we ? where the issues are different. Can that
8 be ? is that doable?

9 MR. JACKSON: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Hopefully, you'll only
11 have three of four items on the sheet.

12 MR. JACKSON: Well, understanding that we
13 may get a variety of positions that are presented by
14 the community. We'll try to summarize them as
15 concisely as possible and report back to you.

16 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Okay. I think that
17 would help us. I know it would really help me. I'm
18 sure everybody else has used what I just asked for,
19 but if we get that, then that way we can proceed in a
20 fashion in March when we discuss it. Okay?

21 MR. JACKSON: All right.

22 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Well, what we're going
23 to do is, we're going to leave the record open until
24 3:00 p.m. March the 7th, Ms. Wheeler and the Office of
25 Planning.

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1 MS. WHEELER: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: And we're going to try
3 to consider this case at our March 14th meeting.

4 MS. WHEELER: Could you repeat that again?
5 March what?

6 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: March the 7th. The
7 record is going to be open until 3:00 p.m. on March
8 the 7th.

9 MS. WHEELER: Thank you, sir.

10 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: And we're going to
11 consider it in our March 14th meeting. Now, after we
12 take ? I guess I would be better off to read the
13 closing statement, but after we take the proposed
14 action, there is another 30-day comment period in
15 which ? before we take final action. So there will be
16 another period to comment.

17 So with that, ladies and gentlemen and the
18 other members of the Commission, I wish to thank you
19 for your testimony and assistance in this hearing.

20 The record in this case is left open until
21 March the 7th at 3:00 p.m. And the case is expected
22 to be considered on the 14th.

23 Please note that all filings are to take
24 place no later than 3:00 p.m. and should also be
25 directly served on the National Capitol Planning

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1 Commission.

2 The Commission will make a decision in
3 this case at one of its regular monthly meetings
4 following the closing of the record. Hopefully, the
5 March 14th meeting.

6 If any individual is interested in
7 following this case, please contact staff, Ms.
8 Schellin or Mr. Moy to determine whether this case is
9 on the agenda of a particular meeting.

10 You should also be aware that, should the
11 Commission propose affirmative action, the proposed
12 action must be published in the D.C. Register as
13 proposed rule making with a period of time for
14 comments.

15 In addition, the proposed rule making will
16 be referred to the National Capitol Planning
17 Commission for Federal impact review.

18 The Zoning Commission will then take final
19 action at a public meeting following receipt of public
20 comments and the National Capitol Planning
21 Commission's comments. After which, a written final
22 rule making end order will be published.

23 Any questions?

24 MS. WHEELER: No. But if possible, may I
25 have a copy of that?

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1 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: Copy of?

2 MS. WHEELER: Of what you've just said? Is
3 that possible?

4 CHAIRPERSON HOOD: The opening and closing
5 statement? Nobody has ever asked for that. This is
6 popular. Okay. I'm sure that won't be a problem.

7 MS. WHEELER: That would be great.

8 (Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at
9 7:49 p.m.)

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